



The Journal

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MWR Hosts Color Me 5K



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 William Phillips



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Life and Advice of Military Nurses After the Military

By MC2 Kevin V. Cunningham
WRNMMC Command Communications

Retirement from military nursing is not the end of service for some here at Water Reed Bethesda. Throughout the facility, retired service members continue to use skills learned from their medical experience to lead and set new standards for patient well-being and to guide those in the field they dedicated their lives too.

“Every role I’ve held as a Navy nurse has definitely guided me in the development of my present role at Walter Reed,” said Virginia Raderstorf, Department Chief for Executive and Legislative Affairs. “The gifts of my military career have been the diversity of roles and locations to which I was assigned and the people with whom I’ve served.”

A San Diego native, Raderstorf volunteered throughout high school at Balboa Naval Hospital as a Junior Army-Navy Guild Organization (JANGO), a hands-on role which



PHOTO BY MC2 KEVIN CUNNINGHAM

Virginia Raderstorf, department chief for executive and legislative affairs at Walter Reed Bethesda, served on the Navy Nurse Corps for more than 20 years. “Every role I’ve held as a Navy nurse has definitely guided me in the development of my present role at Walter Reed,” she said.



PHOTO BY MC2 KEVIN CUNNINGHAM

Christopher Gillette, a retired U.S. Navy lieutenant commander and nurse, is the current command emergency manager at Walter Reed Bethesda. A serious car accident while in high school guided Gillette’s decisions to become a nurse, as well as emergency response management.

mirrored that of a nursing assistant. “I fell in love with caring for patients and I could not imagine anywhere I would rather start my career than in the military,” said Raderstorf who went on to serve in the Navy Nurse Corps for more than 20 years.

For Christopher Gillette, a retired U.S. Navy lieutenant commander after 26 years of service and the current Command Emergency Manager at Walter Reed, his path to nursing started under different circumstances.

“I was in a serious car accident while in high school,” said Gillette. “Following my recovery, I visited the paramedic and emergency medical technicians (EMT) who responded to thank them and I ended up joining the county rescue squad as a volunteer. This experience made it clearly evident that I wanted to continue helping people as a nurse.”

“The exposure to so many aspects of nursing and the continuous educational, training and management experiences in the military have given me an

exceptional skill set which has clearly carried over to my current job and helps with that success on a daily basis,” said Gillette.

When asked what advice she would give to someone considering life as a military nurse, Raderstorf stressed the importance of recognizing the vast responsibilities the profession brings.

“Each nurse will be part of the personal journey of the myriad patients and families they touch. The honor of our field is in those untold moments that no one ever sees. Take that honor and responsibilities seriously,” said Raderstorf.

Gillette added his own advice. “Learn the ability to effectively communicate with patients and their families. Learn to be calm in stressful situations; learn to be compassionate and attentive to the details. Every day presents new challenges and opportunities, but knowing that I was able to help make a difference for so many patients and their family members in their time of need has been truly a rewarding experience.”

Bethesda Notebook

Prostate Cancer Support Group Meetings

The Prostate Cancer Support Group meets at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center the third Thursday of every month. The next meeting will be June 15 from 1 to 2 p.m. and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the America Building, River Conference Room, third floor. Spouses and partners are invited. Military ID is required for base access to WRNMC. For those without a military ID, call Prostate Center at 301-319-2900 for base access. For more information, contact retired Col. Jane Hudak at 301-319-2918 or jane.l.hudak.ctr@mail.mil.

Master Clinician Recognition

Walter Reed Bethesda’s Master Clinician Recognition Program will be June 16 at noon in Memorial Auditorium. All are invited. The program recognizes the medical center’s master and associate master clinicians.

Cancer Awareness Events

The John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda hosts its Annual Cancer Research Seminar on June 19 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Cancer Awareness Day on June 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Both events will be in the America Building at the medical center. For more information, contact Sylvan McDowell at 301-295-9320 or Reisha Maharaj at 301-319-3487.

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Naval Support Activity Bethesda

Commanding Officer: Capt. Marvin L. Jones
Public Affairs Officer: Jeremy Brooks
Public Affairs Office: 301-295-1803

Journal Staff

Managing Editor MC2 William Phillips
WRNMMC Editor Bernard Little

Writers MC2 Kevin Cunningham
Andrew Damstedt
Kalila Fleming
Megan Garcia
Joseph Nieves
AJ Simmons

NSA Bethesda	
Fleet And Family Support Center	301-319-4087
NSAB Emergency Info	301-295-6246
NSAB Ombudsman	
Dedra Anderson	301-400-2397
NSAB Chaplain’s Office	301-319-4443
	301-319-4706
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Rosemary Galvan	301-319-3844
SARC 24/7	301-442-2053
SAPR VA 24/7 Helpline	301-442-8225

Walter Reed Celebrates Army's 242nd Birthday

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Command Communications

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center celebrated the 242nd birthday of the U.S. Army during a special flag ceremony June 8 in front of the historic Tower on Naval Support Activity Bethesda.

The U.S. Army has its roots in the Continental Army, which the Continental Congress established June 14, 1775 to fight the American Revolutionary War.

"If you look back in our history, we've always been early," said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Robert C. Luciano, guest speaker at the ceremony, referencing the WRNMMC's celebration held nearly a week before the actual Army birthday.

"The founding of the Army came before the Declaration of Independence. Said another way, we had an Army before we had a nation," Luciano continued.

"That tells you something about how important our Army has been to this nation. Our Army has been there at every important moment from the founding of our country to today," added Luciano, senior enlisted advisor of the Defense Health Agency. He is the first Army senior noncommissioned officer to hold the position, serving as the personal advisor to the DHA director on all issues associated with the readiness, morale, welfare and utilization for the 2,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and civilian personnel assigned at 29 locations world-wide supporting the DHA.

"If you look at our Army, we've gone from one that marched with a single-shot rifle around some of what is now the United States of America, to an Army that can put 1,000 paratroopers in aircraft, land them on your doorstep and they're as lethal as can be globally. Or with the help of the Navy and the Air Force, put 1,000 tanks in your backyard and put steel on target from so far away you're out of range to fire back. That's an Army," Luciano stated.

"We used to be the biggest and the baddest Army on the face of this planet," Luciano continued. "Now, we're a lean, mean fighting machine and the baddest Army on this planet. No Army yet has endured what we've done, and our battle streamers tell some of that story," he added.

Luciano said Soldiers are universal with the ability to adapt, improvise and overcome. "I've proudly served in harm's way with many of them," he continued. The command sergeant major has served two combat deployments in Iraq, in addition to numerous other assignments worldwide.

While saluting all service members, Luciano said he has served alongside a "special group" of Soldiers throughout his nearly 34-year military career, Army medics. He added the Continental Congress established the Hospital Department on July 27, 1775, almost a year before America was born on July 4, 1776. "So Army medics were there ready to fight and take care of the wounded warrior before our nation was established," he said.

"Soldier medics were there with General Washington, General Pershing, General Eisenhower, General Powell, General Petraeus and many other distinguished leaders. Over the last 242 years, we have always been there, from Valley Forge to Baghdad, Balad and beyond," Luciano added.

"I am proud of our role in our great nation's history.



PHOTO BY MC2 KEVIN CUNNINGHAM

Members of the U.S. Army Band perform during the U.S. Army's 242nd birthday celebration June 8 at Walter Reed Bethesda.

I'm proud to be a Soldier, and I'm proud to work with the men and women of this country and all around the globe protecting [our] ideals," Luciano continued. "As a Soldier standing here today, you've earned every right to look sharp, stand tall and be proud."

The DHA senior enlisted advisor added those in Army medicine have worked in "a larger formation – the Joint Force," more frequently in recent years. He said working with the formations of the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and coalition partners has made the Army better, enhanced esprit de corps and resulted in the highest survival rate in the history of warfare. "Along the way, we've learned a lot, and it's made medicine stronger and better around the globe.

"We are One Team, skilled and resolute," he concluded.

The Army flag ceremony followed Luciano's remarks. Army Sgt. Maj. Marc Selby, chief clinical NCO at WRNMMC, explained the U.S. Army's history is displayed in its colors, lineage, campaigns and commendations. "The [Army] flag has been used by the U.S. Army for 242 years to signal and rally its troops. For Soldiers, it is a proud symbol of the importance of Army history."

He added the story of the Army's flag and campaign streamers "is intricate and delicate involving a great multitude of the Army's most prominent leaders. It has traveled around the world and has been present on every front for each of its heroic battles. It has withstood the test of time and serves as a beacon representing the fighting spirit of our warriors, present and past."

WRNMMC Director Col. Michael S. Heimall said the Army flag ceremony isn't done very often, but when it is it serves as "a powerful reminder of the service of the Army, the armed forces as a whole, and more importantly, the men and women who wear the uniform today, who have worn the uniform in the past, and the sacrifices those who will wear the uniform in the future, make for their country.

"To be able to do [the flag ceremony] at Walter Reed, a sacred place where we get to care for our nation's most severely wounded service members regardless of what uniform they wear, is special," the colonel added.

Soldiers representing WRNMMC, DHA and the U.S. Army participated in the flag ceremony. Each placed one or more of the 189 battle streamers the Army has earned throughout its history on the



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Robert C. Luciano, senior enlisted advisor of the Defense Health Agency, serves as guest speaker at Walter Reed Bethesda ceremony celebrating the 242nd birthday of the U.S. Army on June 8 at the medical center.



PHOTO BY MC2 KEVIN CUNNINGHAM

A Soldier prepares to place a battle streamer earned by the U.S. Army during its 242-year history on a flagpole bearing the Army flag during a ceremony June 8 celebrating the Army's birthday.

flagpole bearing the Army flag as Selby read a little about the history of those battles.

"Our Army has earned many honors in its 242 years of service. However, we must never forget it was the men and women of our nation who sacrificed their lives for our freedoms," Selby said. "Even today, Soldiers are deployed around the world protecting the freedoms we hold dear. They are not alone. Our Soldiers will always place the mission first. They will never accept defeat. They will never quit, and they will never leave a fallen comrade."

Following the flag ceremony, Heimall, Luciano and WRNMMC Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis were joined by Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John O'Grady, representing WRNMMC's oldest Soldier, and Pvt. Kodi Nailon, representing WRNMMC's youngest Soldier, to cut the Army birthday cake.

The ceremony concluded with the singing of the Army song.

Menghestab named Navy Lodge Associate of the Year

By Andrew Damstedt
The Journal

She thought she was going to Navy Lodge's annual training meeting to give a presentation of her experience at Navy Lodge Bethesda in front of her colleagues.

She didn't learn the real reason she went to the training until three hours after giving her presentation while attending the awards dinner when her name was called to receive the Navy Lodge Associate of the Year award.

"I hear my name and I turn around; I realize that it was actually me," said Rahel Menghestab, Navy Lodge Bethesda guest service lead.

In addition to being surprised, she said she felt humbled to receive the award and that it was nice to be recognized for her work.

"We have a lot of different hats here at the Navy Lodge Bethesda – cause we're a smaller operation – sometimes I feel overwhelmed, sometimes a little stressed, sometimes you don't know if your work is being noticed, so it was very nice," she said.

She said she was told to prepare a presentation for the annual worldwide training and strategy workshop in Albuquerque, New Mexico on May 19. Her 20-minute presentation was on Ubuntu (an African philosophy) and connecting to guests on an emotional level.

"That was my first time ever giving a presentation to more than five people, so I was very nervous, but I actually thoroughly enjoyed it," she said. "I gave it in front of about 50 managers and I got a



PHOTO COURTESY ANA HERRERA-RUIZ

Navy Lodge Bethesda Guest Service Lead Rahel Menghestab holds her Navy Lodge Associate of the Year award and poses for a photo with Navy Exchange Service Command CEO R.J. Bianchi.

lot of great positive feedback."

Menghestab received the award from Navy Exchange Service Command CEO R.J. Bianchi at the awards dinner in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"Rahel exemplifies premier guest service in everything she does," said Ana Herrera-Ruiz, Navy Lodge Bethesda general manager. "She has received several awards for demonstrating premier guest service to a lobby full of guests, attending to their needs and ensuring their well-being all at the same time. Guests know her by name, enjoy checking in with her and are very comfortable when she is handling their reservation."

Menghestab started at the Navy Lodge as a

part-time associate. Through the encouragement of managers, she applied to the guest service lead position.

She said she likes meeting the people who stay at the Navy Lodge, especially the Wounded Warriors who have extended stays. One group who left a memorable impact came from the country of Georgia. They stayed at the Navy Lodge for a year.

"At first there was a lot of language barriers; their English was not the best, but just being with them, we ended up watching football games all the time," she said. "We ended up watching Manchester United soccer games with them and then they would root for the Oklahoma Sooners because they realized (their uniforms) were the same colors. It was a bonding experience and meeting with people who at first didn't really talk too much, and then we built up a relationship. Connecting with them on that level was great."

She's worked at Navy Lodge Bethesda for 4.5 years and received recognition for outstanding customer service in 2016. In addition to her regular duties, she helps fellow employees in their training and positions, and assists management on several monthly projects.

"In the absence of the housekeeping supervisor, she trained an incoming housekeeping associate on daily operations, room assignments and proper operations of the Navy Lodge," her nomination read. "During a snow storm, she was the first to volunteer to stay overnight to cover any shift. Always looking out for guests, she was able to avoid a short notice water shutoff which would have caused guest complaints to increase and possible early checkouts."

Walter Reed Bethesda Frocks 29 Sailors

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Command Communications

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center frocked 29 Sailors during a ceremony June 8 in Memorial Auditorium.

Frockees included six new first class petty officers, five new second class petty officers and 18 new third class petty officers.

As part of Navy tradition, the frocking ceremony precedes the Sailor actual advancement to the next rank and grants the Sailor the right to wear his or hers advanced rank, as well as assume those responsibilities that come with the promotion.

During the ceremony, each Sailor received a frocking letter signed by WRNMMC Director Army Col. Michael S. Heimall stating the Sailor's appointment to the higher rank "carries with it the obligation that the Sailor exercises increased authority and willingly accept greater responsibility. Occupying now a position of greater authority, you must strive with a renewed dedication toward providing the valued ideal of service with honor," the letter added.

The day was extra special for newly-advanced Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Travis Hunter, as it was also his 29th birthday.

"Being frocked to me means you have dedicated yourself to the Navy, to the mission, and to your fellow juniors and superiors," Hunter stated. "Being

frocked is a testament of not just my hard work, but how I have chosen to inspire those around me. [The day] was extra special to me because it was not only a celebration of my advancement in my career, but it was also my birthday," he added.

Hunter explained his frocking comes with "greater authority and responsibility because of the expectations and high standards that a first class petty officer is expected to uphold, not just at a department or command level, but to the Navy."

The day was also special for newly-frocked HM3 DiJonae Bates. After receiving her frocking letter, Bates was joined on stage by friends and co-workers who gave her flowers and the new petty officer could not hold back her emotions, shedding a few tears at the recognition for her hard work.

"Frocking means to me that my hard work has paid off and I am now being recognized for working at [an advanced] level," Bates said. "Being frocked means I can pass along my knowledge and continue to help other Sailors in a more advanced way than before. The responsibilities I see with my new rank include mentoring others, expanding my knowledge and continuing to grow as a Sailor," she stated.

Walter Reed Bethesda Chief of Staff Navy Capt. (Dr.) John Rotruck and Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis were on hand to congratulate the frockees, their families and others who supported them. Both emphasized promotion and success in the military are not achieved individually, but with the backing and support of others, beginning with



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center frocked 29 Sailors during a ceremony June 8 in Memorial Auditorium. The medical center's Chief of Staff, Navy Capt. (Dr.) John Rotruck (top row, left) and Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis (top row, right) were on hand to congratulate those frocked and their families.

the family and those at the person's "second home," Walter Reed Bethesda.

"Life is about progression," Willis said. He added the frocking served as ceremony to acknowledge the potential of the Sailors to serve at the next level, as well as to acknowledge those who are already fulfilling those responsibilities and obligations of a higher rank.

Sailors looking to add rank to their collar can find information on the My Navy Portal, the one stop shop to manage their Navy careers, at <http://my.navy.mil/>.

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MWR Holds Color Me 5K

Photos By MC2 William Phillips
NSAB Public Affairs

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Morale, Welfare and Recreation held a “Color Me 5K” race June 10 around NSAB. Runners were doused with colored powder along the course and could also run an obstacle course before and after the race.





Kidney Donation Strengthens Bond Between Marines

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Command Communications

Daniel Contreras and David Stallings share a special bond as Marines. They served in the same unit together for nearly three years during the late 1980s into early 1990. Their bond became even stronger on Nov. 28, 2016 when Stallings donated his kidney to Contreras during a procedure which took place at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

The two met in February 1988 when Stallings was transferred to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment (originally 1st Battalion 4th Marines) at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center — 29 Palms, California.

“Our primary military occupational specialty was as machine gunners. We were assigned to Heavy Weapons Company (Mobilized), 3rd Battalion 7th Marines. We were part of a small group of Marines that ate, slept, worked and played together in the 7th Marines,” Stallings explained.

In June 1990, Stallings was honorably discharged on a college early-out in June 1990, and the two parted ways.

Stallings returned to his native Annapolis, Maryland, but was recalled back to active duty briefly in 1991 for Operation Desert Storm. He then served in the Marine Reserves from 1991 to 1994 while continuing his education and working as a licensed mortgage banker, senior loan officer and licensed security



PHOTOS COURTESY DAVID STALLINGS

Daniel Contreras (left) spends time recently with David Stallings and Stallings’ children, 10-year-old daughter Savannah Marie Stallings and 7-year-old son Nicholas Hamilton Stallings.

systems technician in the Annapolis area.

Contreras continued to serve in the Marines until he was medically retired in 1998 following a stroke. His last duty assignment was as a weapons instructor at Marine Corps Combat Development Command — Quantico, Virginia. The Lorain, Ohio native remained in the area following his retirement.

The two occasionally communicated with a phone call or e-mail exchange here and there over the years.

“He did not live that far from me, but we could never seem to find the time to meet,” Stallings added. “We started communicating more often with the help of social media and Facebook.”

Last May, Contreras was told he had progressive kidney disease and would need dialysis. He was also informed that eventually, he could possibly need a transplant.

“He told me that he was going to be at Walter Reed Bethesda for his first dialysis,” Stallings recalled. “I told him over the phone that I had already been preliminarily tested in 2015 by the VA Hospital in Washington D.C. for a possible kidney donation to another Marine who lived in California, but that did not work out.

“I went on to tell him that all of my testing so far came back satisfactorily. I asked him what his blood type was he said, ‘O positive.’ I said, ‘Danny, I am O positive, and I want to donate a kidney to you,’” Stallings said.

“I couldn’t believe him,” said Contreras.

“I told him I would like to visit him at Walter Reed Bethesda, and said, ‘OK,’ but I could tell he was in disbelief or maybe just thought I was full of it and just me carrying on without having thought it through,” Stallings added.

“What he did not know is I had already made up my mind right then and there on the phone,” Stallings continued. “I felt like it was definitely some sort of sign that the first donation did not work out because me donating to him felt so right. We have always had a bond that only Marine

brothers and sisters will understand. Now since the donation, somehow that bond is even stronger. I did not think that was possible, but it surely is.”

Contreras’ teared up as he explained what happened next.

“He knew before I knew it was going to happen and called me to say, ‘It looks like it’s a go for November,’ and I said, ‘What are you talking about?’ He said, ‘We’re going to do the transplant.’ I said, ‘OK,’” Contreras explained.

The two wanted to do the transplant on Nov. 10, the Marine Corps’ birthday, but the logistics just didn’t work out. They explained following additional testing when it was determined for sure Stallings was a good match for Contreras, there was not enough time as WRNMMC already had surgeries scheduled for that day.

“As I look back, I will never forget how professional and respectful the people and the treatment were at Walter Reed Bethesda,” Stallings said. The care and treatment I received at Walter Reed was sincerely the best I have ever experienced from [Lt.] Colonel (Dr.) Jason Hawksworth and his entire team to all of the hospital staff, I came into contact with were top-notch in their care and sincere respect for me and Danny.”

Stallings added he doesn’t regret his decision to donate his kidney to his Marine brother.

“I will always have his Six [Back],” Stallings said. “Making this decision was

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Men’s Health Month Observed During June

By AJ Simmons
WRNMMC Command Communications

As National Men’s Health Month, June serves as a reminder for men to remain aware of the threats to their health.

The Center for Prostate Disease Research at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) provides thorough care and advice to men regarding their health throughout the year.

“We see men for all prostate-related problems, disease,” said Air Force Col. (Dr.) Inger Rosner, the director of the Center for Prostate Disease Research. “A good majority of the active duty population is male, and we serve those on active duty and retirees. It’s something that can affect all men, and I think we improve the quality of life of men in the service.”

Rosner, who earned her medical degree at the Uniformed Services University and has spent much of her career at WRNMMC, explained that many men express hesitance to seek medical attention for health concerns. Recognizing June as Men’s Health Month helps to encourage men to be aware of their health and the importance of regular checkups.

“[Prostate disease] screening should be done in a very educated way,” explained Rosner. “Either with primary care or, if there’s a concern, referring to urology so we can interpret what the prostate-specific antigen test

(PSA) means for that particular patient.” She also noted the increased importance of men aged 55 to 69 to seek regular screenings.

Screenings, Rosner pointed out, are typically done via two methods: the aforementioned PSA test and a digital rectal examination. The PSA is a blood test that monitors for specific antigens that help physicians to deduce if there is any abnormality within the prostate whereas the digital rectal examination is a physical evaluation by a physician to check for abnormalities of the prostate.

The importance of these screenings is made evident by the common occurrence of prostate cancer among men. The Center for Prostate Disease Research explains in a bulletin: “Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer found in American men, after skin cancers. One man in six will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime.”

There are many available treatments for prostate cancer, depending on the severity of the patient. Minor treatments typically involve active surveillance in patients with limited signs of prostate cancer, while more intensive treatments include surgery, radiation therapy and hormonal therapy.

Men’s Health Month is not limited to just prostate care, however. As the Director of Urologic Oncology as well as the Director of the Center for Prostate Disease Research, Rosner recognizes the multifaceted approach to men’s

health offered at WRNMMC.

She explained that each week, multiple departments overlap in a multi-disciplinary clinic at the Center for Prostate Disease Research. The clinic involves meetings with urologic oncologists such as Col. Rosner, clinical psychologists to address concerns of anxiety and depression, an andrologist to discuss reproductive concerns and a nurse educator who provides general information regarding urologic cancers.

“I follow the patients through the continuum of their care,” said Rosner. “You establish a relationship with the patients and their family, and you follow up for many years. Some patients I’ve been following up for ten years.”

Rosner maintains high hopes for the future of urologic oncology and men’s health in general. As new screening recommendations are put forth by organizations such as the American Urologic Association, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, she hopes that more awareness will be drawn to the field of urologic cancers.

In the coming years of research and treatment, Rosner hopes to see the development of good biomarkers that will help improve the detection of prostate cancer as well as targeted therapies to combat advanced prostate cancer.

For more information about urologic cancers or the Center for Prostate Disease Research, go to www.cpdrr.org.

KIDNEY

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absolute and easy for me.” He added it took him “all of a Nano second” to make the decision, adding “Marines NEVER will leave a Warrior on the battlefield.”

“I was proud to be in a position to be able to help out my brother in his time of need...a decision that probably helped me as much as it helped him, probably more,” Stallings continued. He explained he was at a crossroads in his life with changes playing out on many levels, from employment to going through a divorce from a 12-year marriage, which provided him with two young children.

“I am continuously learning how to be the best father I can be for my children in a post-married life,” Stallings continued. “I am very happy and proud that my 10-year-old daughter Savannah Marie Stallings and 7-year-old son Nicholas Hamilton Stallings, got to go through and share this entire experience with me. It is one of my proudest moments and decisions

of my entire life, and I am very grateful that my children got to experience it with me. I could preach to them and talk to them for years on end, but an experience like this has more lessons that come with it than there is paper to write on or money to buy something with,” he added.

Contreras said things have been “great” since the transplant. Prior to it, he said dialysis had been a challenge and slowed him down. “I can do things now which were difficult to do before. The other day, I was working on the gutters and a year ago, I couldn’t do that, I was pretty much stuck in the house. I couldn’t do much physically. Now, it’s kind of like I got a second chance at life.”

He said he has seen Stallings and his family a few times since the transplant, and they are planning a trip to the Marine Corps Museum, soon.

Contreras added organ donation gives others hope.

“Walter Reed Bethesda has been good to me on more than one occasion,” Contreras continued. “This is the second event in my life Walter Reed Bethesda

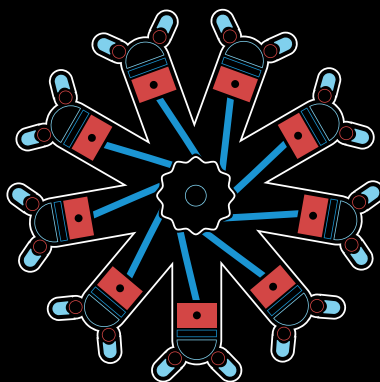
has taken good care of me.” He explained following the stroke in 1998, he spent nearly three months at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center, having lost use of nearly all of the right side of his body because of paralysis. “Through physical therapy, I gained most of that back.” “The most overriding

theme for me about the whole experience is how I realized the bond that Danny and I share has always been there,” Stallings added. “We had not seen each other for almost 25 years until the day we met at Walter Reed Bethesda for his dialysis back in 2016, and then again when we were

in the hospital together starting Nov. 28 for a few days and when we moved to the Fisher House on base for a couple more weeks.

“We were joking like old times and it was evident then that the brotherhood has never been stronger and will always be there. Semper Fi,” Stallings said.

“I would do it again in a heartbeat,” he added. “It’s been almost six months and I feel great. Danny and I talk regularly, checking up on each other and I always hang up the phone with a smile on my face knowing we are both very fortunate men. Fortunate is an understatement.”



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Walter Reed Bethesda Celebrates 'Asian, Pacific Islander American' Heritage Month

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Command Communications

Walter Reed Bethesda celebrated Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month on May 26 with a program highlighting some of the history, dances and foods of the more than 56 ethnic groups from Asia and the Pacific Island who live in the United States.

Since 1992, Congress and the White House have designated May to recognize the achievements and contributions by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the American story. May was chosen for the observance to commemorate the arrival of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

Retired Consul General from the U.S. Department of State Sonny Busa served as guest speaker at the program. He is the Filipino Veteran Recognition and Education Project regional director for Washington, D. C., Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and West Virginia. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Busa served as its visiting professor of international relations, having served political and consular affairs assignments in Honduras, Korea, Hong Kong, Philippines, Vietnam, Ethiopia and Kuwait.

"Everywhere there is a celebration [such as this] you find it is called 'Asian American and Pacific Islander,' which is grammatically incorrect. It should be 'Asian and Pacific Islander American,'" Busa said. "The Pacific Islanders are also Americans," he explained.

"The whole idea of this celebration and the month is that we are Americans," Busa continued. "That's what binds us together."

Discussing the Philippines, Busa explained the republic consists of more than 7,000 islands with Christianity as its dominant religion, largely because of the influence of the Spanish. He added Islam is the Philippines' second largest religion, with Ramadan observed as a national holiday.

"When you talk about the U.S.-Philippines bond, a lot of that has to do with religion," said Busa.

He explained the Philippines were named after King Philip II of Spain, and Ferdinand Magellan is credited as being the first European to come to the islands. This led to more Spaniards coming to the Philippines, influencing the people's faith, names, language and education.

"For almost 300 years, the Philippines are under Spanish rule," Busa said. "The Spanish left the Philippines with a vibrant culture, but the Filipinos somehow put their own stamp on it."

He explained after 1898, U.S. influence on the Philippines became dominant following the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War, when future Admiral of the Navy George Dewey led the Pacific Fleet in Manila Bay and sank the Spanish fleet on May 1, 1898. The Philippines became a colonial possession of the United States 1898, which lasted until July 4, 1946, when it became recognized by the United States as independent.

"On Dec. 14 of last year, President Barak Obama signed into legislation the Filipino Veterans Recognition Act," Busa added. "This grants the Congressional Gold



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

Dancers from the Filipino Cultural Association at the University of Maryland, College Park perform the traditional Filipino maglalatik dance during the Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month celebration at Walter Reed Bethesda on May 26.

Medal to Filipino Soldiers who fought in World War II under the American flag. This means the 260,000 Filipinos who fought in World War II will now be eligible to receive the Congressional Gold Medal."

He went on to explain the importance of this recognition.

"Finally, after 75 years, the American people are giving a collective thank you to the Filipinos for their efforts," Busa said. "Out of the 44 countries that fought for the United States during World War II, only the Filipinos did not get any recognition. When they signed up to fight the war, they were promised immigration, education, health benefits and pay. In 1946, that was rescinded," he added.

Following Busa's talk, dancers from the Filipino Cultural Association at the University of Maryland, College Park performed the traditional Filipino banga and the maglalatik dances. The banga, or pot dance of Kalinga of the Mountain Province in the Philippines, illustrates the skill and strength of the women as they would carry heavy laden clay pots (banga) full of water. The maglalatik is an indigenous dance from the Philippines in which coconut shell halves that are secured onto the dancers' hands and on vests upon which are hung four or six more coconut shell halves. The dancers perform the dance by hitting one coconut shell with the other — sometimes the ones on the hands, sometimes, the ones on the body, and sometimes the shells worn by another performer, all in time to a fast drumbeat.

Concluding the observance, members of the Walter Reed Bethesda Multicultural Committee and Filipino Association of Bethesda, sponsors of the event, served those who attended traditional foods native of Asia and the Pacific Islands.

In his proclamation for this year's celebration, which is themed "Unite Our Voices by Speaking Together," President Donald Trump stated, "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have distinguished themselves in the arts, literature and sports. They are leading researchers in science, medicine and technology; dedicated teachers to our Nation's children; innovative farmers and ranchers; and distinguished lawyers and government leaders."

"There are more than 20 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Each day, through their actions, they make America more vibrant, more prosperous, and more secure. Our Nation is particularly grateful to the many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who have served and are currently serving in our Armed Forces, protecting the Nation, and promoting freedom and peace around the world," Trump added.

For more information about the Walter Reed Bethesda Multicultural Committee, call Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Zu Yang at 301-295-0638.

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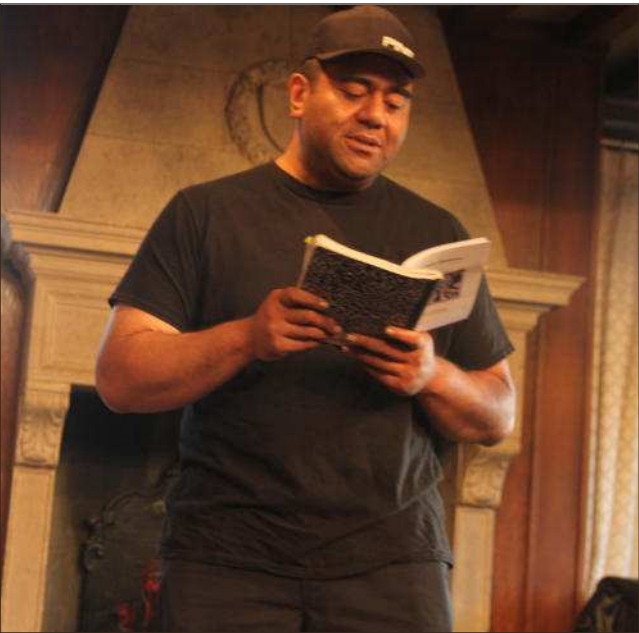
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Combat Paper Exhibit/Reading

Photos by Ashy Palliparambil
USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore

Participants at the week-long Combat Paper workshop at the USO Warrior and Family Center at Bethesda show off their work at an exhibition June 9 at The Mansion at Strathmore. The workshop has participants transform military uniforms into handmade paper, onto which they can share their individual military experiences.



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6/16 11 am

Sri-Lankan Luncheon at the Warrior Café

Sri-Lankan Devilled Chicken, Colombo Lamp Curry

6/17 10 am

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6/18 10 am- 2 pm

Father's Day Brunch at the Warrior Café

Seafood Chowder, Baked Ziti, Pizza, BBQ Ribs, Crab stuffed Shrimp, Prime Rib, Fried Chicken & Waffles, Truffle Mac & Cheese, Omelets, Ice Cream and More. Adults \$14.95, Child(6-12) \$7.25

6/23 5 pm

Nationals vs. Reds Baseball Game

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6/24 7 am

Busch Gardens Williamsburg

Open to All \$43, Liberty Price FREE*

6/25 9 am

Dulles Fine Arts Festival

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6/20 6 pm

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6/29 3:30 pm

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7/1 10 am

FREE* National Zoo

7/4 11 am

FREE* July 4th Celebration at JBAB

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Navy Recreation Center Solomons

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